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BOOK NOTES AND REVIEWS

A. F. WEST, EDITED BY. *VALUE OF THE CLASSICS*. Princeton University Press, 1917. \$1.50.

Last June a notable conference on classical studies in liberal education was held at Princeton University for the purpose of discovering and recording the opinions of successful men in various walks of life concerning the value of the classics in our scheme of education. The invitation to the conference met with a hearty response from men in public life, in business, in journalism, in schools and colleges, in the ministry, in law, in medicine, in engineering, in physical and natural sciences, in modern literature, in political and social sciences, and in fine arts. Only one group of men was purposely excluded from the program—teachers of the classics. Other persons, both in this country and in Europe, interested in the undertaking but prevented from attending, sent letters setting forth their views on the subject.

This volume gathers together the results of this very interesting and timely conference. The editor, a vigorous and aggressive fighter for the retention of the classics in our curriculum, supplies an excellent introduction explaining the plan and purposes of the conference, summarizing its results, and presenting in forceful argument the case for classical studies. Part II contains the addresses delivered at the conference, followed, in Part III, by brief statements by distinguished representatives of all the learned professions. Part IV deals effectively with the statistics which have lately been so absurdly misused by the violent opponents of the classics as to lead to general misunderstanding of the facts involved. The volume is completely indexed according to contributors and topics.

The book is a valuable addition to the rapidly growing number of works devoted to the defense of the classics. Its value is two-fold. On the one hand, the plan of the conference answers convincingly the oft repeated charge that the only defenders of the classics are those who make their bread and butter by teaching them. Such persons were not asked to give their views. The opinions expressly sought were those of men who have nothing material whatever to gain or lose by their advocacy but who desire only the best in education. They place themselves on record as being convinced from their own experience that the classics are an essential part of what is best in education. The further widespread misconception that scientific men are hostile to training in the classics is also demolished by the list of distinguished men who speak in their favor.

On the other hand, the absurdity is recognized of seeking to prove "the use of studying Latin and Greek" on a basis of material gain—a style of proof which would be equally absurd for any other department of learning which does not train directly for the earning of money, but which seems to be expected from advocates of the classics. The value of such study can be demonstrated only by those who have known its benefits. They, and they only, can tell us whether and how it has been worth while in their own careers. This sort of evidence is not readily accessible, but here at last is a rare collection of it, being the opinions of a large number of men of the highest intellectual attainments, chosen, not because of their known advocacy of such studies, but as representatives of the best in all fields of learning. That all of it is emphatically in support of the classics is the most powerful defense yet put forth.

Professor West's statement of the case for the classics in his introduction is admirable. It is unfortunate that such ammunition so rarely hits the enemy for whom it is intended. One likes to read what one already believes—a principle especially true of those who would eliminate all reading that cannot be turned into dollars and cents. It is to be hoped that the weight of authority possessed by the many contributors to this undertaking will persuade to the reading by such folk of what they do not already believe. If so, their theories are likely to undergo modification.—GEORGE HOWE.



ELIOT, CHARLES W. *LATIN AND THE A. B. DEGREE*. Occasional Papers No. 5 of the Publications of the General Education Board, 61 Broadway, New York. Free Distribution.

In this paper Dr. Eliot considers "the expediency of continuing to require some knowledge of Latin on the part of all candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts," and proposes the abolishment of such requirements.

Seventy-six leading American colleges and universities are divided into five groups, based on their requirements in respect to Latin before and after entrance. This grouping shows "that, so far as the college course in preparation for the degree of bachelor of arts is concerned, Latin has already disappeared as a requirement for that degree in a decided majority of the institutions included in the lists, and that over half of the institutions whose practices have been examined make no demand on the secondary schools of the country that they teach Latin." The study shows further "that most of the state universities require no Latin of candidates for the degree of bachelor of